

Named For Pioneer

Dixon Springs takes its name from William Dixon, who obtained a school land warrant in 1848 from Gov. Augustus C. French. His cabin was a landmark for many years as was an old log church on the adjoining knoll.

A small community grew up at Dixon Springs and featured a general store, post office, blacksmith shop, grist mill, and several churches.

Dixon Springs become a 19th century health spa which attracted hundreds of people to its seven springs of mineral-enriched water. A bathhouse provided mineral or soft water baths, hot or cold, available at any time. The natural beauty of the area and its interesting stone formations helped to give the park valley a more equable temperature in the summer than most of southern Illinois. This made the resort so popular that people come by steamboat excursions from as far away as Paducah, KY, Evansville, IN, and Cairo to Golconda. They then traveled by train to within a couple of miles of the park.

Natural Scene

The entire county is hilly and during rainy weather, rivulets cascade down the hills in the park, forming waterfalls of varying size and height.

Bold cliffs and crags overhang a bubbling brook, while large boulders overgrown with ferns, ivy, lichen, and moss fringe the hillside. Giant century-old trees interlock above the small creek as cliffs rise on either side. Huge boulders are scattered throughout the valley.

Equally intriguing are the names give numerous points of interest, including Album Rock, Wolf Pen, Lover's Leap, Ghost Dance, Pluto's Cave, Alligator Rock, the Chain of Rocks, Devil's Workshop, and Honey Comb Rock. The principal canyon has walls nearly 60 feet high with a long-narrow passageway.

Deer, squirrel, rabbit, groundhog, and fox are sometimes seen among the park's trees, which include oak, cypress, gum, pine, sycamore, walnut, persimmon, hickory, birch, and maple. Dogwood and catalpa trees blossom profusely in season. In the spring the Jack-in-the-pulpit, violet, lady's slipper, May apple and sweet William lend even more natural beauty.

An open forest a short distance north of the park was used by General John A. Logan as a meeting place when he organized a company of soldiers to serve in the Union army.

Facilities

- **Picnicking** ■ Picnic tables and outdoor stoves are available at three shaded picnic areas. A picnic shelter, playgrounds, parking areas, and drinking water are also available.
- **Swimming Pool** ■ A modern swimming pool, bathhouse, and 45-foot water slide are provided for swimmers' enjoyment. A lifeguard is on duty at all times. Towering oaks, elms, and birch trees shade the pool.
- **Concession Stand** ■ Located near the swimming pool, the stand provides a variety of refreshments.
- **Trails** ■ There is a self-guided, 1.7-mile nature trail and a 1-mile trail through Ghost Dance Canyon.
- **Camping** ■ There is a Class B trailer camp area with a sanitary dumping station and electricity available. A tent camping area is also provided for the primitive camper. Campers need to obtain a permit from the park personnel. Cabins and a group camping area are available for organized groups.

Recreational Trails Program

This trail brochure was made possible due to funding provided by the Federal Highway Administration through the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). Monies are funded through the Federal Motor Fuel Tax and administered through the National Recreational Trails Fund Act. Trail projects are supported by the federal government, which provides up to 80% reimbursement of cost. State funds provide the balance of the funding for the projects. The trails program encourages trails management practices to serve a wide variety of trail users. The program is administered in Illinois by the Department of Natural Resources in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Transportation.

Exotic Species

Plants and animals not native to Illinois are exotic species. Most of them are harmless to our state; however, some can be very invasive to native plant communities and can overwhelm or wipe out native species. Prevention and control of exotic, invasive species requires tremendous cooperation between managers and all users of parks, natural areas, and privately owned land. To learn more about exotic and invasive species and how you can help prevent their spread, visit the IDNR Exotic Species Website at: <http://www.dnr.state.il.us/lands/education/ExoticSpecies/exoticspintro.htm>.



Dixon Springs State Park
Rural Route 2
Golconda, IL 62938, (618) 949-3394

- While groups of 25 or more are welcome and encouraged to use the park's facilities, they are required to register in advance with the site office to avoid crowding or scheduling conflicts.
- At least one responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.
- Pets must be kept on leashes at all times.
- Actions by nature can result in closed roads and other facilities. We hope you enjoy your stay. Remember, take only memories, leave only footprints.
- For more information on state parks, write to the Department of Natural Resources, Clearinghouse, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271 visit our website at www.dnr.state.il.us.
- For more information on tourism in Illinois, call the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Bureau of Tourism at 1-800-2CONNECT.
- Hearing-impaired individuals may call the Department of Natural Resources' TTY number, (217) 782-9175, or use the Ameritech Relay Number, 1-800-526-0844.

Equal opportunity to participate in programs of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and those funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies is available to all individuals regardless of race, sex, national origin, disability, age, religion or other nonmerit factors. If you believe you have been discriminated against, contact the funding source's civil rights office and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, IDNR, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271; (217) 785-0067; TTY (217) 782-9175.

State of Illinois
Pat Quinn, Governor



Department of Natural Resources



Dixon Springs

S T A T E P A R K





The Park

Dixon Springs State Park is one of several state parks in the Illinois Shawnee Hills. The park is situated on a giant block of rock, which was dropped 200 feet along a fault line that extends northwesterly across Pope County.

The 786-acre park is about 10 miles west of Golconda on Illinois Route 146 near its junction with Illinois Route 145.

History

The area around the park was occupied by various tribes of Algonquins who, after the Shawnee had been driven from Tennessee, had settled near the mouth of the Wabash River. Dixon Springs was one of their favorite camping grounds and was called “Kitchemus-ke-nee-be” or the Great Medicine Waters.

One of the better known Indian trails, which the early French called the “Grand Trace,” passed to the west of the park and south to Fort Massac, then branched out into lesser trails. Much of the “Grand Trace” is Illinois Route 145, one of the most scenic highways in the state, running nearly all of its length south from Harrisburg through the Shawnee National Forest.

This section of the state was part of an Indian reservation occupied for a time by about 6,000 Native Americans. Like the buffalo, most were gone by the early 1830s.

